

Message Text

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S E C R E T PONTA DELGADA 0134

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJECT: AZOREAN SEPERATIST GROUPS SURFACE

1. FOR FIRST TIME, CONCRETE EVIDENCE EXISTENCE GROUPS OPENLY ADVOCATING INDEPENDENCE FROM PORTUGAL HAS BEGUN APPEAR ON SAO MIGUEL. INITIALS OF TWO GROUPS, AZOREAN LIBERATION FRONT (FLA) AND MOVEMENT FOR INDEPENDENCE AZOREAN REPUBLIC (MIRA), BEGAN APPEARING ON WALLS SAO MIGUEL DURING LAST WEEK. LEAFLETS SIGNED BY FLA NOW BEING DISTRIBUTED IN PONTA DELGADA. LEAFLETS CALL FOR INDEPENDENCE TO END CONTINENTAL ECONOMIC AND FISCAL EXPLOITATION OF ISLANDS, EQUATE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PORTUGAL AND AZORES TO THAT PORTUGAL AND AFRICAN POSSESSIONS PRIOR APRIL 25/74, CALL ON LISBON TO BE CONSISTENT AND ALLOW AZOREANS "RIGHT TO INDEPENDENCE". AT ONE POINT DOCUMENT STATES FLA "WILL NEVER ATTACK" UNLESS "OBLIGED DEFEND OURSELVES".

2. GROUPS APPEARANCE COINCIDES WITH WHAT MAY OR MAY NOT BE RELATED INCIDENTS. ON NIGHT MAY 10 AUTOMOBILE BELONGING RADICAL LEFTIST, CONTINENTAL BORN RADIO ANNOUNCER CAUGHT FIRE AND BURNED. ON NIGHT MAY 12, ABANDONED BARRACKS COASTAL ARTILLERY UNIT ON SAO MIGUEL ALSO BURNED. THOUGH PRESS ATTRIBUTED BOTH FIRES TO SHORT CIRCUITS, IT SPECULATED THAT SEPERATISTS RESPONSIBLE.

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3. WE FAIRLY CERTAIN THAT FLA ASSOCIATED WITH, IF NOT IDENTICAL

TO NUNO CAMARA/JOSE ALMEIDA INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT. ACCORDING GENERALLY RELIABLE SOURCES, BAYOT BLATTEIRRE ALSO ACTIVE IN FLA, LEADING US BELIEVE THAT FRONT IS "MAPA MILITARY ARM" REFERRED TO BY ALMEIDA IN CONVERSATION WITH DESK OFF KELLY. CAMARA AND ALMEIDA PREVIOUSLY TOLD CONSOFFS THAT SOME MEMBERS THEIR GROUP ANXIOUS BEGIN TERRORIST ACTIVITIES (INCLUDING SABOTAGE LEFTIST, CONTINENTAL, AND GOVERNMENT PROPERTY) BUT THAT THEY (CAMARA AND ALMEIDA) ADVISING AGAINST IT UNTIL USG BACKING COULD BE SECURED. IF RECENT FIRES MORE THAN COINCIDENCE, IT POSSIBLE ACTIVIST MEMBERS HAVE DECIDED GO AHEAD WITHOUT SUCH BACKING.

4. WE LESS CERTAIN ABOUT MIRA. SOME SOURCES BELIEVE IT AND FLA REALLY SAME GROUP BUT USING DIFFERENT NAMES TO CONFUSE AUTHORITIES. OTHER SOURCE INDICATES MIRA LOOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH PONTA DELGADA PPD AND THAT IT SAME GROUP WHICH BROKE UP COMMUNIST RALLY ON SAO MIGUEL LAST JANUARY.

5. COMMENT: FEELING HERE IS THAT APPEARANCE SEPERATIST GROUPS MARKS OPENING NEW PHASE IN DEBATE INTER AZOREAN-PORTUGUESE RELATIONS IN PONT COUPERA. GROUPS DEFINITELY BEING TAKEN SERIOUSLY LOCALLY AND, THOUGH CURIOSITY NO DOUBT LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR CURRENT INTEREST, WE THINK IT LIKELY THAT THEY WILL BE BETTER RECEIVED BY AZOREAN POPULATION IN GENERAL THAN WAS MAPA. BY DEFINING GOALS IN TERMS AUTONOMY AND EMPHASIZING LOYALTY TO CONTINENT MAPA NEVER ABLE TAP CONSIDERABLE ANTI-CONTINENTAL SENTIMENT WHICH POSSIBLY SINGLE COMMON DENOMINATOR AMONG AZOREANS. SEPERATIST GROUPS PUTTING ISSUE IN TERMS OF AZOREAN VERSUS CONTINENTAL, A POSITION WHICH WILL BE MORE EASILY UNDERSTOOD AND THEREFORE HAVE GREATER ATTRACTION FOR AVERAGE AZOREAN. FLAS MAIN PROBLEM WILL BE TO PRESENT SELF AS TRULY POPULAR MOVEMENT AND AVOID UPPER CLASS STIGMA WITH WHICH MAPA BECAME RIDDLED. IF CAN DO SO MAY COME TO ELICIT REAL, AND POSSIBLY EVEN ACTIVE, SUPPORT FROM POPULATION. WE BELIEVE THAT LISBON WILL HAVE DIFFICULTY FINDING SOLUTION THIS PROBLEM. IF, AS SOME HERE HAVE SUGGESTED, CONTINENTAL TROOPS BROUGHT IN TO STIFFEN LOYALTY LOCALLY CONSCRIPTED GARRISONS, LISBON WILL FACE DILEMMA OF APPEARING SUPPRESS AZOREAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT WHILE TURNING OVER REINS OF GOVERNMENT TO SIMILAR GROUPS IN AFRICAN POSSESSIONS. USE OF CONTINENTAL TROOPS ALSO HAS DISADVANTAGE THAT WOULD BE SECRET

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LIKELY ACERBATE EXISTING LOCAL ANIMOSITIES TOWARD CONTINENTALS. THESE FACTORS PERHAPS RESPONSIBLE FOR NON REACTION TO DATE BY LOCAL CIVIL AND MILITARY AUTHORITIES TO SEPERATIST GROUPS A APPEARANCE.
PARRIS

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